

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Magadan Oblast)

SUBJECT Labor Camps in the Kolyma Region

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Camp Spokoynaya (N 63-58, E 145-26)

1. Camp Spokoynaya was located on the Spokoynaya River and was in the neighborhood of Kholodnyy and Arkagala (N 63-11, E 147-57), not more than eight kilometers from the highway (sic). It took four or five days to travel by truck from Magadan (N 59-34, E 150-48) to Camp Spokoynaya. The camp was about two hours by truck from Levyi Bereg. 25X1
2. Camp Spokoynaya was divided into two sections, one for political offenders and one for criminals. Each section had about 800-900 inmates. [REDACTED] The two major national groups in the political section consisted of about 300 Ukrainians and about 300 Balts. The rest of the section was made up of Germans, Poles, Chinese, North [REDACTED] and some Soviet citizens from the Caucasus. There were no quarrels in the camp among these nationalities. The only quarrels were between Moslems and members of other faiths. 25X1
3. The chief of the two sections of Camp Spokoynaya was Captain Isayev (fnu), MVD. He wore a uniform with blue stripes on the collar and hat band. He had four assistants, a major and three lieutenants, one for cultural matters, one for political affairs, and one in charge of work details. 25X1

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4. The political camp consisted of seven or eight barracks. Five of the barracks were for sleeping quarters; one was a hospital; and one was a dining hall. The barracks were divided into two sections with 50 or 60 men in each. The prisoners slept on boards, and each had one blanket.

5. About 20 men in Camp Spokoynaya had tuberculosis. Only eight of these cases were taken to the hospital. [redacted] tuberculosis cases by the fact that the men were very thin and frequently had fever.

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Camp near Orotukan (N 62-16, E 151-42)

6. Camp Orotukan was located just outside the town of Orotukan. There were approximately 800 male political prisoners in this camp. The nationalities represented were the same as in Camp Spokoynaya. There were no fights among the nationalities. [redacted] only criminal prisoners had fights, which were concerned primarily with stolen objects. In Camp Orotukan, the prisoners slept on mattresses stuffed with hay.

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Camp Discipline

9. In the camps for political prisoners (Berlag) the discipline was very strict, and the prisoners worked because they were afraid. The internal camp guards were unarmed; but, whenever political prisoners went to work, they had to be escorted by armed guards and dogs. This was not true for prisoners condemned for some crime. Criminals were allowed more freedom; and, if the camp administration permitted it, they were allowed to go around without escorts, even beyond the camp limits. When a political prisoner came within ten paces of a camp guard or any member of the administration, he had to come to attention and stand still until the guard was ten paces past him. No political prisoner, under penalty of arrest, was permitted to use the word tovarishch. He had to

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address the camp commander in the proper way, then recite his name, date of birth, and paragraph of sentence.¹ A prisoner might have to leave the presence of the guard and return three or four times, until he did everything right. Before leaving camp and on returning, the prisoners were searched. The number which appeared on the prisoner's cap and on his back had to be visible at all times. Three times source was punished with five days of solitary confinement for failure to have his number clearly visible.

10. In all camps there was a prison for solitary confinement; it was called kartser. In solitary confinement, prisoners received 300 grams of black bread and a pint of water (0.5 liter) per day, but no heat. Often a prisoner would get both kartser i bur (brigada usilennogo rezhima).

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Prisoners condemned to the "tough brigade" were given the same food as other inmates, but the former were confined to their barracks and had no freedom to walk even within the camp limits. These prisoners had to do the same work as the others.

11. The camp commander could also deprive a prisoner of any pay and of his discount (zaschet) on the length of his sentence. This discount on sentence meant that a prisoner could reduce his sentence by overfulfillment of the norms of work. For one day of work the maximum discount was three days. The rates were as follows:

<u>Norm Fulfillment</u>		<u>Discount</u>
120	percent	$\frac{1}{2}$ day.
120-130	percent	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ days.
130-140	percent	2 days.
140-145(sic)	percent	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ days.
Over 150	percent	3 days.

this system applied only to Dalstroy and the work on the Volga-Don Canal. Actually, this system was a mere incentive to do more work. Most foreign political prisoners were released before completion of their sentences, regardless of their discount earnings.

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Camp Culture

12. Three or four times a month there were assemblies for all prisoners. These meetings were devoted almost entirely to propaganda for more work; there was little political propaganda. Once a month a film was shown, usually in the dining hall. Each month a propaganda bus (agitmashina), equipped with a loud-speaker blaring forth work slogans and other propaganda, came to each camp to bring the next movie. Many of the movies contained anti-American propaganda. the titles of a number of the Soviet films: "Smelyye Lyudi" (Bold Men); "Kubanskiye Kazaki"; "Iskaniye Zemli Siberskoy" (Exploration of Siberia); "Traktorist"; "Za Granitsey" (Beyond Our Borders); "Daleko ot Moskvyy" (this film showed how the komсомols worked in building a city); "Vstrecha na Elbe" (Meeting on the Elbe); "Sekretnaya Missiya"; "Oni imeyut Rodinu" (this film concerned children returning to their home in Berlin after the Soviet conquest of the city; it was apparently presented in a light favorable to the Soviets).

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Criminal Classes

13. All the political prisoners kept together. Among the criminal offenders, however, there were various classes. At the top of the order were the thieves (vory), who were respected the most because they had a certain sense of honor. At the bottom of the order were the suki, who sold out to the administration and worked for it. They were always at odds with the vory. A class by itself was constituted by the "lawless" (bespredelnyye),

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who were against everyone. [redacted] there were also "redcaps" (krasnishapochniki)

[redacted] they might be stool pigeons. A class that cut across the lines was formed by the blatnoy, who were athletes and thought they were better than the others. They tried to evade work, [redacted] referred to them as "gold-bricks". They could be found among both the vory and the suki.

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[redacted] Comment. This probably refers to the article of the republic Criminal Code under which the prisoner was sentenced.

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